

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL
MINUTES
July 1, 2008

On Tuesday, July 1, 2008, the Edgefield County Council held its regular monthly meeting at 6:00 P. M. in the County Council Chambers, 225 Jeter Street, Edgefield.

Members present

C. Monroe Kneece, Chairman
Willie C. Bright, Vice Chairman
Norman Dorn, Councilman
Joel D. Hudson, Councilman
B. Everette Kitchens, Councilman

Others present

John W. Pettigrew, Jr., County Administrator
John F. Byrd, Jr., County Attorney
Lynn W. Strom, Finance/Budget Manager
Barbara R. Stark, Clerk to Council
and others as per list attached

Chairman Kneece called the meeting to order and the invocation was given by Rev. Jasper Lloyd. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Chairman Kneece asked for a motion to approve the July 1st agenda and supplemental agenda as presented. Motion was made by Councilman Bright, seconded by Councilman Hudson. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes

The motion to approve the minutes of the June 3, 2008, Edgefield County Council meeting was made by Councilman Bright, seconded by Councilman Hudson. Motion carried unanimously.

Reports

No comments.

Ordinances

Third reading of Ordinance No. 07-08-597, "An Ordinance Adopting Updated Building Codes", was approved with a motion made by Councilman Kitchens, seconded by Councilman Bright. Motion carried unanimously.

The first reading of Ordinance No. 08-09-599, "An Ordinance Enacting and Adopting a Supplement to the Code of Ordinances for Edgefield County, SC", was approved with a motion made by Councilman Hudson, seconded by Councilman Kitchens. Motion carried unanimously.

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Motion was made by Councilman Hudson, seconded by Councilman Kitchens, to approve first reading of Ordinance No. 08-09-600, "An Ordinance Calling for a Referendum to be Held on Election Day, November 4, 2008, on Whether Terms of Office for Edgefield County Council Members Shall be Changed from Two Year Terms to Four Year Staggered Terms." Motion carried unanimously.

Resolutions

Councilman Hudson made the motion to approve Resolution No. 08-09-306, "A Resolution to Restrict the Use of Tobacco Products at All County Recreation Facilities. The motion was seconded by Councilman Kitchens and the motion carried unanimously.

New Business

Women in Unity

The Women in Unity requested funding of \$1,500.00. No funding was included in the 08-09 Budget and it was not funded last year. Motion was made by Councilman Bright, seconded by Councilman Hudson, to fund the Women in Unity \$500.00. Motion carried unanimously.

Forensic Investigator

The sheriff's department requested council's consideration of a grant match for a new forensic investigator. The grant will pay for an officer's salary, benefits, a vehicle, training, mileage, travels during that year. Having a forensic investigator would allow other investigators to follow up on leads and interview suspects, witnesses, etc., rather than spending time collecting evidence which is time consuming. Also, having a forensic investigator on duty would mean less time waiting for another agency to respond to process the crime scene.

The sheriff has agreed to forego one of the patrol cars budgeted for this year, which is about the same amount of money needed for the required match. That would take care of it for this year. Future years there will be an obligation on the part of the county. The next two years the sheriff's department is eligible for renewing the grant. It isn't assured it will be received but a very good chance – looking at about \$20,000 for the second and third years and after that it is all on the county. At that time the county has to decide if they will keep the forensic investigator or add deputies.

The question was asked about the replacement of patrol cars. Captain Wash stated that the purchase of one has been delayed until September until they receive the results of the DPS grant. The DPS grant would pay for two cars for those two individuals. We have three cars at the present that have over 130,000 miles on each one. It is advised not to use cars with more than 125,000 miles on them for pursuit vehicles.

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A guest, Bob Ramsey, asked “why was this not included in the budget for 2008-09” and Captain Wash replied that it was his understanding that in the initial stages of the budget that it was added and then taken out. The requirements for the grant and the deadline for submitting the grant did not coincide with the dates of the final budget.

A motion was made by Councilman Hudson, seconded by Councilman Dorn, to match the grant for the new forensic investigator for the sheriff’s department, using the \$30,942 in place of buying one of the vehicles. Motion carried unanimously.

Report / VA Office

John Rikard and Fay Vaughan reported on the Conference of the National Association of County VA Offices held previously in Charleston. They stated that it was a very beneficial week, and they thanked council for allowing them to attend this very important training session.

No Old Business on the agenda. However, the Chairman did ask for a vote if council would like to escrow funds that are remaining in the recreation district accounts at the end of each year into separate cash accounts. This would help each council district accumulate funds each year for projects.

Chairman Kneece made the motion to escrow funds to each account, seconded by Councilman Bright. Motion carried unanimously.

Administrator’s Report

The Sheriff’s Department has received a \$10,950 grant for bullet proof vests (replacing old vests). The county’s match of \$2,737.50 is in the budget.

Also, we have received a \$7,140 courthouse security grant. Today was the first day of having a manned single point of entry on the first floor of the courthouse. There is a walk-thru metal detector at the entry.

The painting of the courthouse began a couple weeks ago (outside). It is almost completed and the interior will begin within the next few days.

The little league all-star tournament was hosted by Edgefield this past weekend. Many compliments have been received. The Edgefield Minor League team won and the Johnston Major League team won. Both of the teams will be going to Greenwood for the next round this weekend.

Councilman Dorn asked to speak and expressed his concerns about recent writings on the internet website edgefelddaily.com.

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Rick Greene, Upper Savannah COG, was present but had nothing to bring before council.

No Guests

Comments from Public

Jimmy Stevens, a resident from Jimmy Road (northern part of the county) addressed council concerning the bridge on Jimmy Road. The family has to take a child approximately two miles to the school bus because the bus will not come in because of the bridge. He asked for the county's help. The chairman asked the administrator to look into this situation and have a report for council.

Mrs. Nidiffier asked of the status of Normandy, Calliham Building, and All God's Creatures. The chairman stated that Normandy is on hold and council does not know anything on that project at the present. Calliham purchase is on hold because we are trying to get a clear title. On "All God's Creatures" nothing has been heard from the study group.

Rev. Gordon asked the administrator the status of Northside Park. "Next project for the Northside Park is a covered shelter with restrooms. The estimate on that is approximately \$40,000 and there isn't that much money at the time. We are building a "pot of money" through the annual county appropriations and through the PARD money the county receives. We are at about \$20,000. There is no date as to when we may have the funds – the agreement of all parties involved is they would like for the shelter to be the next project. Of course the basketball court is open, the softball field is open, and the fencing is up and the walking trail is open. There have been several youth events this summer and things are progressing."

Roy Blackwell asked how the four-year terms would work. "If there is a positive vote to go to four-year staggered terms, how would that effect either the current seated council or the new council?" The three elected in November with the highest number of votes would take the four-year terms and the other would take the two year terms. This has been brought up two times and each time it has been voted down. Edgefield, York, and Anderson Counties are the only three counties in the state still on two year terms. The staggered terms come from the first election and future elections would be for four year terms.

The chairman stated that about seven years ago he brought up in Columbia at an Association of Counties meeting to do away with the republican and democrat parties in county elections and vote for the person. That did not go over well at all. The school board is non-partisan – why can't the council.

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Claims approved:

PAYROLL	6/2/08 thru 6/15/08
Regular.....	\$220,300.38

PAYROLL	6/16/08 thru 6/29/08
Regular.....	\$217,447.22

General Operating.....	\$776,322.54
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Executive Session

Council may convene in executive session pursuant to Code Section 30-4-70 (a) (1) of the SC Code of Laws 1976, as amended, concerning a personnel matter, and returning to regular session at the discretion of the Chairman.

Council may convene in executive session pursuant to Code Section 30-4-70 (a) (5) of the SC Code of Laws 1976, as amended, concerning a proposed industry, and returning to regular session at the discretion of the Chairman.

Motion was made by Councilman Dorn, seconded by Councilman Kitchens, to convene in executive session concerning a personnel matter and to be briefed by Fred Humes, Economic Development, on the latest proposed industry. Motion carried.

Returning to regular session, the Chairman stated there was brief and informative information received from Fred Humes concerning a new industry. Discussion on personnel is to bring more information back to council.

There being no further business, Councilman Dorn made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Hudson. Motion carried unanimously. The next regular scheduled meeting of council will be Tuesday, August 5, 2008.

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ATTEST

Barbara R. Stark, Clerk to Council